

AREA

V minute news

vol. 2 no. 20

May 20, 1970

THE ELA COMMUNITY REPORT ON HEALTH IS RELEASED

Community involvement is the key to resolving the health crisis in the barrio--that is the essence of the health report released May 18 at the press conference held at the Greater Los Angeles Press Club. The 97-page report, almost a year in the making, comprises an extensive 8-month survey of health needs in East Los Angeles as well as the recommendations of the Community Health Workshop and the follow-up Health Conference. The study reveals the gamut of health problems--narcotics, alcoholism, dental, mental health and retardation, health of senior citizens and welfare recipients, public and private health services, and language and ethnic barriers relating to Spanish-speaking patients.

Inserted in this issue of V-MINUTE NEWS is an excerpt giving some of the earliest Post-Conference results; not included is the recent action of County Supervisor Ernest E. Debs in forming a committee of grassroots representatives to help plan a \$4½ million health complex to be constructed in ELA. The committee, scheduled to hold its first organizational meeting this week, will be concerned with the architecture, as well as services, to make certain that the total facility will be in tune with the community it serves.

Providing history and background of the project at the press conference were representatives of the co-sponsoring organizations: Arnold Martinez, Chairman of the ELA Steering Committee on Health; Carmen Guzman, Community Consultant; Mrs. Sirel Forster, Area Director, East Central Welfare Planning Council; Frank F. Aguilera, Assistant Coordinator-Community Programs, Area V RMP.

Others present at the conference were: Dr. Louis Hertz (representing Dr. Louis Saylor, Director of the State Department of Public Health); Dr. Gerald A. Heidbreder, Dr. Max Rosenblatt and Mr. Harry Klissner, all of the County of Los Angeles Health Dept.; Mr. Bernard Arvellas, Controller, LAC-USC Medical Center; Donald W. Petit, M.D., Mrs. Toni Moors and Luis A. Pingarron, all of Area V; and members of the RMP-ELA Steering Committee--Dr. Jane Shields, Jose Carlos, Elias Chico, Ben Cortez, Dr. Earl Harrison, Joe Hori, Victor Ledesma, Art Raya, Fernando Chavez and Alice Nariega.

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It will be recalled that at the East Los Angeles Conference on Health Needs, held Nov. 22, one of the results considered most exciting by the ELA community was the commitment by Dr. Roger O. Egeberg to appoint someone from the ELA community as Special Assistant to serve as liaison between the Spanish surnamed population of the nation and HEW. The community has been finding, to its dismay, that the wheels of government grind exceedingly slow in matters of this sort.

Soon after the Conference, a Selection Committee from the community was set up to screen applicants and in late February, the choice had been narrowed down to three. In last April these three were requested to appear in Washington, where they were interviewed by Dr. Egeberg and by heads of agencies in Health Services and Mental Health Administration. It now appears that a political appointment normally takes anywhere from four to eight months and, in addition to meeting the requirements for government service rating, that the candidates must also be approved by the various Republican groups at both federal and state levels. Dr. Egeberg was probably not aware that securing approval through the political patronage system could be so time-consuming when he made the original commitment.

At an interview with the Selection Board on May 4, at the ELA Health Center Library, Dr. Egeberg explained that he had been very impressed with the three candidates chosen by the Selection Board and that while it was necessary to go through other steps before the appointment could be finally announced, he hoped his final decision could be made public early in May. He assured the Selection Board that the final choice would be one of the three candidates selected by the community.

Questioned about the possibility of other governmental jobs for the two unsuccessful candidates, Dr. Egeberg felt it was very possible that other places could be found for them in Government; he said that as soon as the appointee learned about the job opportunities available in Government, he was sure more people from Mexican American communities would be recruited to work in Washington.

Asked when the appointee would start functioning, Dr. Egeberg stated that it would, of course, depend upon who was appointed and how soon he was able to locate in Washington. After that, he would like the appointee to visit the Health Services and Mental Health Administration to see what is being done in various programs related to delivery of health services, and then begin to make visits to the Mexican American communities in the Southwestern states to familiarize himself with the existing problems.

The word this week is that the appointee has been OK'd at all levels and the decision is awaiting approval at the White House.

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An excerpt from
THE COMMUNITY REPORT ON EAST LOS ANGELES HEALTH

POST CONFERENCE EVENTS

As a result of the East Los Angeles Regional Medical Programs project and the conferences which grew out of it, there have been some changes and some commitments made in the delivery of needed and recommended services in the East Los Angeles Area.

At the Federal level, it is notable that Roger O. Egeberg, M.D., Assistant Secretary for Health and Scientific Affairs, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, has committed the Department to hiring a Mexican American with appropriate background and training to serve as a liaison between members of the Mexican American segment of the population of the South Western United States. A selection committee for screening applicants be set up in the East Los Angeles area. This committee is composed of representatives from ELA Health Task Force, LUCHA, ELARCA, RMP ELA Committee on Health Need, ELA and Northeast District Health Officers.

Two Congressmen who represent the ELA district, George Brown Jr., and Edward Roybal, have pledged their interest and support in working toward the solution of the health problems in East Los Angeles which have been identified by the project. Mr. Brown circulated the conference report to many sub-committees in Congress that have an interest in health and welfare and to various operational health services departments, and mental health in particular. These departments have responded by seeking additional information from Regional Medical Program Area V and have set up a liaison with the ELA Area so that there is a ready means of communication between Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles in these concerns.

A Federal funded East Los Angeles transportation project is now operational providing transportation to senior citizen clubs and other organizations dealing with senior citizen problems. Mr. Donald Rumford, the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, has responded to the receipt of the report on the East Los Angeles Regional Medical Programs project by informing George Brown Jr. that he has instructed an appropriate O.E.O. official to provide Congressman Brown with a prompt report on how the Office of Economic Opportunity can be of assistance to the East Los Angeles community. The Division of Regional Medical Programs has informed Area V Regional Medical Programs that they are sending their Operations Officer to discuss the project report and ways in which the national office can become more instrumental in solving some of the problems identified in this study.

Oscar L. Gallego, Principal of the East Los Angeles Occupational Training Center, has announced his willingness to make medical skill courses available beginning with nursing assistant's courses. In addition, he is providing numerous courses for clerical skills and preparation for taking Civil Service examinations.

The Los Angeles County Health Department, one of the principal governmental agencies the object of local criticism, has shown interest in improving and extending the delivery of services. The District Health Officers of East Los Angeles and Northeast have been in conference and submitted

recommendations for improved delivery of services in their districts. Service trends which have begun have been accelerated in these districts. Both in East Los Angeles and Northeast, there have been added clinics and extension of clinic hours so that the services are more readily available in the community. For example, the Health Officer's Clinics have been extended through the evening hours on Tuesday in the Northeast Health Center. Also, Youth Clinics are now held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings.

The East Los Angeles Health Center has an alcoholic rehabilitation clinic which meets on Monday nights with group sessions and lectures on Wednesday evenings. There is also a Tuberculosis Control Clinic two nights a month and weekly sessions on Thursday evenings of a clinic for Family Planning. The District Health Officer in East Los Angeles (Dr. Jane Shields) reports that she is very pleased to have an active Health Council (a citizen's advisory group), which meets with her every third Thursday morning. She hopes that this Council, with effective sub-committees, will enable the communication between residents of East Los Angeles and the public department delivering health services to understand one another better. The Health Council has already developed strong sub-committees, one of which is devoted specifically to the problems of senior citizens.

The County Department of Mental Health Plan for 1970 emphasizes increases in direct services to children and adolescents, more crisis services, evening hours, planning at the community level, work adjustment training, and outpatient and preventive services. The County Board of Supervisors has authorized the establishment of an inter-departmental County drug abuse clinic with L. S. Hollinger, the Chief Administrative Officer of Los Angeles County, as its Chairman. In a stepped-up program to combat drug abuse, the Board has authorized a program which will employ 166 individuals, 76 of whom will be in the Health Department and 82 in Olive View Hospital where there will be 25 beds opened for acute drug de-toxification. They have also authorized eight more positions to be added to the Narcotics Information Service and have authorized the opening and staffing of five drug abuse clinics (one in each supervisorial district). In the private sector, the East Los Angeles Free Clinic and LUCHA have both received funding from the United Way through the United Way Urban Crisis Committee.

The County as a whole has also accelerated its program of employing members of minority groups. The Director of Personnel, Gordon Nesvig, reports that 84 Mexican Americans have been hired as attendants at Los Angeles County U.S.C. Medical Center, and he is actively seeking 156 more for employment specifically requiring ability to speak Spanish. The goal is to provide at least one Spanish speaking attendant in each hospital ward at all times to meet the communication needs of Mexican American patients. Similar changes in other County departments, such as the County Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, Public Social Services and others, are also under way. In particular, the Department of Public Social Services has hired 65 Mexican American social workers thus far in their drive to improve services to their Spanish speaking clientele. Mexican American representation is also known to have increased on the Boards of Comprehensive Health Planning organizations and the Mental Retardation Services Board.

There has also been growing awareness among the employees of the Los Angeles County U.S.C. Medical Center (particularly among the house officers and other individuals employed in the direct delivery of health care) of the impersonal and often less than optimum medical care being made available to minority groups. The house officers have been engaging in dialogue with the medical director and full-time faculty members who are employed at the Center. These resident physicians have also brought unprecedented legal action against the Department of Hospitals and County officials to improve the quality of medical care in the institution. These Medical Center activities have not occurred as a direct result of the project and conferences which grew out of it, but they appear to have been stimulated by the second conference which was held at the LAC/USC Medical Center.

AREA V REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAMS
CALENDAR
May 1970

Thursday, May 21

CCRMP	Ad Hoc Conference Committee	11 a.m. to 2 p.m. International Hotel, L.A.
CCRMP	Staff Consultants	2 p.m. to 5 p.m. International Hotel, L.A.

Friday, May 22

AREA V	Seminar - Family Wellness	11 a.m. to 1 p.m. RMP Conference Room
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Monday, May 25

AREA V	American Indian Free Clinic	8:30 p.m. Compton
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Tuesday, May 26

AREA V	Library Services	6:30 p.m. RMP Conference Room
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Wednesday, May 27

AREA V	Staff Meeting	9:30 a.m.
CCRMP	CCU Coordinating Committee	1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Airport Marina Board Room Los Angeles
COMP - LA	Health Facilities & Services	12 noon - Los Angeles

AREA ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS FOR 1970

July 14 September 8 November 10

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN'S MEETINGS FOR JUNE AND JULY

June 5 June 19 July 3 July 17 July 31

STAFF MEETINGS SUBJECT TO CHANGES--CHECK WITH OFFICE FOR LATEST
INFORMATION

V minute news

Published by
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAMS
AREA V

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